1:Dobrizhoffer M-5 (ca. 1760) 1822
SI4 Abipon SI4



They climb high trees, And sit quietly
on their boughs, in order to plunder the hives 149
concealed there, without any sense of danger [222 48 75]
or giddiness. After their removal to our colo- [753]
nies, being fatigued with handling the axe and
the plough, instruments to which they were
unaccustomed, and feeling their strength fail
them, their bodies bathed in sweat, and burn-
ing with heat, they exclaimed, *La yivichigui*
*yauigra*, now my blood is angry. For this they 757
have a ready remedy: they plunge a knife deep
into their leg, watch the blood spouting from
it for some time with pleased eyes, and at
length stop it by applying a clod to the wound,
saying with a cheerful voice that they are re-
covered, and feel perfectly well. They are 147
as lavish, and almost prodigal in shedding 304
their blood, for the purpose of obtaining glory,
as of procuring health; for in public drink-
ing parties they cruelly prick their breast,
arms and tongue with a bundle of thorns, or
with the sharp bones of a crocodile's back, with
much effusion of blood. They emulate one [703]
another in doing this, in order to obtain a re-
putation for bravery, and that these sponta-
neous wounds may render them less fearful of
shedding their blood in engagements with the
enemy, and may make their skin impenetrable
by covering it with scars. Boys of seven years [866]
old pierce their little arms in imitation of their

827 replies with a groan, it is in my heart: so that it is very difficult to understand from the Indians what their complaint is, and where it is situated, unless it be betrayed by other signs. Loathing
753 of food for ever so short a time is, in their
827 opinion, a certain indication of sickness. If an Abipon, from having overloaded his stomach, abstains from food for a little while, the women immediately augur the worst respecting him, and make no end of their lamentations, saying every now and then with a groan, *Chik rkeñe*, he does not eat. As soon as the sick person takes ever so little food, though the disorder be not yet subdued, they think him out of danger, so that *Là rkeñe*, he eats now; and *Là-yamini*, or *Là natatéuge*, now he is recovered, now he revives, are with them synonimous.
[164] Moreover, as the Abipones are but very seldom
165 sick, so very few of them die when they are sick. I do not doubt but that in the frequent conflicts they have with enemies and tigers, numbers fall yearly by the nails of the one, and the claws of the other. In most of the remainder, extreme old age is generally the fatal dis-
[165] ease. In a word, greatest part of the Abi-
761 pones die when they are satiated with life, when, weary of the burden of years, they long for death as the rest and solace of their miserable existence. This circumstance occasions